NUMB. X.

THE PLAIN DEALER.

Dulcis Odor Lucri.
didiciſſe fideliter Artes.
Emollit mores nec ſinit eſſe feros. HOR.

FRIDAY, APRIL 24. 1724.

AMONG the *Benefits* we owe to *Trade*, there is One *Diſadvantage*, unavoidably annexed to *It*.— It *weakens* our *Humanity*, and *eradicates* an *open Confidence*, which moſt Men are *born* with; but *loſe*, as it were, *inſenſibly*, by the Influence of *low Maxims*: ſuch as are early imprinted on the Minds of *all* who are *educated* to the Arts of *Getting* and *Bargaining*.

THE *Notions* of ſuch Men, unleſs in ſome *extraordinary* Caſes, are ſtrangely *narrow*, and *confin'd*. They are ſeldom capable of *reliſhing*, or even of *comprehenhending*, the Extent of a *diſintereſted Beneficence*.— Their *Wiſdom* is but *Cunning*, and their *Learning* is a *Craft*. When they hear the Fame of ſome *vaſt Bounty*! ſome *Expanſion* of the *Soul*, that is *unuſual*, and *aſtoniſhing*! Inſtead of that *Emotion* and *warm Tranſport* of Heart, which it *excites*, in the *Generous*, All *their* Wonder is the *Effect* of their *Incapacity* to *conceive* it: for, meaſuring it by a Suppoſition, That there *muſt* be ſome *latent Deſign*, they are at a *Loſs* to account *for*, what cou'd be the *Gain*, or the *Drift* of it!

CIVILITY, in theſe Men, is not *Manners*, but *Myſtery*. Their *Friendſhips* are a Kind of *Barterings*, for *Exchange* of *Good Offices*, and the *weakeſt* of their *Paſſions*, are their *Love*, and their *Pity*.

NO *Condition* of Life can be more *afflicted* and *mortifying*, than the *Miſery* of *Owing Money* to theſe *Scantlings* of *Humanity*. They conſider you, *then*, no longer on the Foot of Merit, or Quality; but, as if Good Manners, and Decency, were their *Ready Money Commodities*, they throw off all *Reſpect*, and grow *brutal*, and *unſociable*.

Mr. *Hawthorn*, my Neighbour, the *Suſſex* Juſtice o' the *Quorum*, came lately into the ASSEMBLY, with a *Mein*, diſturb'd, and *Martial*. He ſwung his Arms, like a *Pendulum*. His Face was flush'd, and flaming; and his whole Geſture *menacing*. He puff'd and breath'd ſhort; ſat him down, in one of the Windows; threw his Hat upon the Floor; and, as ſoon as he cou'd ſpeak intelligibly, gave us loudly to underſtand, That he had been waiting, ſix Hours, in a Tavern, without eating or drinking; with a furious Determination, to *break* the *Head* of the *Vintner*.— Is *this*, ſaid he, the *Good-Breeding* of your *Welcome-Mongers*, that keep *Taverns*? —— Is *this*, the little, flattering, ſcraping, ſneering, wagtail *Fellow*, that us'd to be ſo *ready*, and ſo *nimble*?— To rub his Hands, and wriggle forward, like a Spaniel, to the Street End of his Entry? — *Odsbobs!* It was a lucky *Reprieve* for his *Bones*, that he was gone down to the *Cuſtom-Houſe*! for I am verily convinc'd, that, in the *Fury* of my *Heart*, I ſhou'd have *broke* the *King's Peace*, tho' I had *loſt* my *Commiſſion* for't.

THE *Aſſembly* was, by this Time, in a *Midway* Diſpoſition, betwixt *Mirth* and *Aſtoniſhment!* when he threw me a rumpled Paper, and *nodded* at me, to open it. I did ſo, in ſome Confuſion, and, perceiv'd, it was a *Letter*; which, upon a ſecond *permiſſive Nod*, I read, aloud, to the Company.

For Mr. *Robert Hawthorn*, 'Squier. Theſe.

SIR,

I Shud a'thought, how ſuch a Man as you, ſhud a'been a Man of Honour. *Your Friend, as gave you a Character, promis'd, That you was* Ready Money, *for that Pipe of* Neat Port, *as I ſent away, by your Order, to the Carrier's in the* Borough. — *But I find no ſuch Matter. I ha' writ one Letter, beſides this, and had no* Anſwer, *to* none *of* 'um. *I depend upon hearing from you, to my* Content, *betwixt and next* Saturday, *without any Fail*:—— *Or Trouble will enſue.*

Yours,

Giles Winpenny.

I WAS a little at a Loſs how to act in this Buſineſs, for it happen'd, unfortunately, that I had recommended Mr. *Winpenny*, to my worthy Neighbour, Mr. *Hawthorn*; ſo that I was under ſome Surpriz; and in Perplexity, what to ſay: When *Ned Volatile*, whoſe *Levity* is, ſometimes, of *much Weight*, interpos'd, very ſeaſonably, and with his uſual *Vein* of *Humour*.

LEND your Cudgel to *Me*, Mr. *Juſtice* o'the *Quorum*; for, if you ſhou'd *pay* him, your ſelf, you will pay him, with *Intereſt*. — Beſides, it is an Honour that every Body does not *Merit*,— to be *beat* by a *Magiſtrate*.— The Matter is not ſo *great* neither.— If you will do me but the Favour to Sup, to Night, at my Lodgings, there's *my Man*, now, I'll warrant you, can produce half a Score, of ſuch *tender Billets* as this.— I give 'em him, once a Week, to cut out into *Fringes*, by way of Ornament, for my *Candleſticks*.— But, as to poor *Winpenny*, he's an honeſt Fellow, at the Bottom, and no worſe than a *Miſer*—But ſo *pleaſantly* covetous, that, if you were as *learn'd* in him, as I am, you wou'd forgive him, out of *Gratitude*, for the *Laughter*, he wou'd afford you.— Shall I tell you a merry *Story* of him?— Poor *Winpenny*, you muſt know, loſt a Cargo of Wine, that was coming to him, from *Liſbon*; and, in the Anguiſh of his Heart, he reſolv'd to *live no longer*: He ty'd a Rope about his Neck, and faſt'ning it to a Beam, in his Cellar, jump'd, *heroically* off, from an *unlucky*, empty, Hogſhed, that tumbl'd down, from its Stand, and alarm'd one of his Drawers, who was, unſeaſonably

Vigilant.

[Price Two Pence.]

vigilant. The silly Rogue *cry'd out*; and I, happening, at that Time, to be Drinking behind the *Bar*, ran immediately down; and, as Ill-Luck wou'd have it, came Time enough to cut the Rope. — Great Endeavours were us'd, to compose his ruffled Mind. — But, when he was told, the next Morning, in what Manner he was preserv'd, he grew desperate, and uncomfortable; And nothing wou'd serve his Turn, but his Rope must be *paid for*. — I have the Bill, at Home, uncancell'd, where he charges me, by Way of Postscript, with this remarkable Article, —— *For Cutting a New Rope, what you please, or think reasonable.*

Mr. *Hawthorn* lost his Anger, in *Ned Volatile*'s Start of Pleasantry; and the ASSEMBLY grew compos'd, and took Occasion, from this Incident, to enter upon a serious, and instructive, *Chain* of *Reasoning*, on the *Loveliness* of that *Quality*, which is call'd *Generosity*: At the Close of which, the *Major*, who had listen'd, from the Beginning, with a silent Approbation, and a Face augustly sweeten'd, with an *Amiable Reverence*, took his Turn in the Conversation: And, as soon as he offer'd to speak, a chearful Expectation appear'd in the *Eyes* of the whole Company; and every Body pay'd him the Homage of a voluntary Attention.

I have been greatly delighted, said this *Friend* of *Mankind*, with the *Discourse* which I have heard, of an *Excellence*, I *love*: And, which, I remember a fine *Experience* of, by a Companion of mine, an *agreeable*, young Fellow, who, in an *Exigency*, that befel him, tryed the *Difference* of Men's Natures. — He applyed himself to Two Persons; of whom, One was his near *Relation*, and the Other had been his *School-fellow*. He sent each of them a Letter, which had the same Contents, *Verbatim*. — From the first, he had this ANSWER. I keep *both* Copies in my *Pocket-Book*; for I should be sorry to lose Either.

Dear TOM,

YOU could never have applyed your self to me at so unlucky a Time, *as* Now: *For I have not a* loose Corn *by me. The* Funds *are, to me, instead of a* strong Box: *And, you know, when they are in such a fair Way of* Rising, *one would not willingly* sell out; *unless for some* extraordinary *Occasion. I send you the* Note *again, because it don't fall in my* Way *to make the proposed* Use *of it: But I am heartily, and sincerely sorry, that it should happen to be thus out of my* Power: *For no Body in the* World *can be more willing, and ready, at all* Times, *to serve* You, *than*

Dear TOMSY,

Your loving *Uncle*, at Command.

The ANSWER *to his other* LETTER, *was very different, and runs thus,* ---

SIR,

NO good News *can be more welcome to me, than a Proof, That I am honour'd with the* Friendship *of the* Deserving. — *I must consider, in* this Light, *the* Obligation *you have laid me under, by that* Confidence *you allowed to my* Professions *of* Sincerity. —*This* Bill *should have come alone, but that I find my self under a Necessity to* rectify *a* Mistake, *you have made, in the* Note, *you sent me.* — *Forgive me, therefore, that I return it you.*

I am,
With the greatest Respect,
SIR,
Your most Obliged,
And most Obedient SERVANT.

THE *Note*, which he sent back, was that, by which my *Friend* had acknowledged his Receipt of the *Money* he desired to borrow; and which he promised to repay, on *Demand*, to the *Lender*, or his *Order*. All this, the refined Obliger had *tear'd*, with his *Pen*; and, instead of it, wrote what follows, on the blank Side of the Paper. —— *I do hereby declare, That I owe Five Hundred* Guinea's, *to my good Friend, Mr.* S——, *and will always reserve them in a Readiness for his* Call; *in Return for the* Pleasure *he has given me, by borrowing of me* One Hundred.

WHILE we were expressing our *Satisfaction* in this fine-spirited Instance, of the *Art* of *enlarging* Favours, by the *Manner* of conferring them, the *Alderman* was observed to have *fix'd* his Eyes on the Floor, in a Posture of Thought, and Sadness, that was very *unusual* in him. — *Ned Volatile*, who had just made a *Tour*, round the Table, to beg a Pinch of *Spanish* from the *Coquett's Venetian Snuff-Box*, passing close behind the *Alderman*, and supposing him fast asleep, guided Part of it to his *Nose*, and rows'd him, into a Fit of *Sneezing*; which, as soon as he was freed from, he looked round for *Ned Volatile*; and, after a *Half Smile*, and a *Sober Wag* of his *Head*, thus addressed himself to the *Company*.

I knew, I owed this *Favour* to the Wantonness of that young *Mad-cap*; who is as full of *Mischief* as a *Monkey*. He fancy'd, I was *nodding*; and, truly, I am sorry, that he happened to be mistaken; for I was *musing*, and very *melancholy*. — This Story of the *Major*'s brought afresh into my Mind an extraordinary Accident that I met with, my self, in the Year of the *Great Frost*, that was before the *Revolution*.

Many *Losses*, that Year, had disabled me to make good my Credit; so that I was *run upon*, by my Enemies; and gave my self up for no Better than a *Gone Man*. But, one Morning, early, — I shall never forget it! — I was just come down into my *Counting House*, in my Night-Gown, and Slippers; — when, in comes a Porter, and delivers me a Letter; and away he goes, immediately, without asking for an Answer. — The Letter was from a Merchant, that had formerly been my Best Friend; but we had *broke off*, for some Years, upon my refusing to lend him a *Thousand Pounds*, upon his *Bond*; and we had never convers'd, since that Time, till now, that he sent this Letter; the Contents of which, were to tell me, That he was sorry to hear, what was reported abroad, to the *Discredit* of my *Circumstances*; for he knew, it must be owing to some *unfortunate* Accident; since, whatever *Defects* I had, I could never *want Frugality*. — But, however, says he, If *Five Thousand Pounds* can save you, call for it when you please, and I will *lend* it you, by Way of *Punishment*, for an *Unkindness* of Yours, formerly: And since the Mortification This must give you, merits Pardon for your Fault, I will *forget it*, from this Time forward, that we may be Friends again, as usual.

THE *Alderman* was interrupted, in this Part of his *Story*, by a sudden Burst of *Tears*; which he strove, in vain, to suppress; and which affected the whole ASSEMBLY with a *Sympathy*, more *touching*, than could have been excited, by the most pathetick Force of *Eloquence*. — He recover'd himself, after a short Pause, and went on, to inform us, That, within less than a Week, after he had sav'd himself from *Ruin*, by Receipt of this Money, his generous Friend, the *Merchant*, fell out of a *Boat*, below Bridge, and was, unfortunately drown'd. — It is true, continu'd the good, old *Alderman*, I repaid it, very punctually, and have made all Acknowledgments, and done all Services, in my Power, to his sorrowful *Widow*, and his *Children*. — But, *alas!* What did all *That* signify? — *He* was dead, that had *Oblig'd* me: — And *gone*, beyond all Possibility of ever knowing, how I *repented* my unkind Usage of him! And what a *Shame*, and a *Change*, his *Generosity* had produced in me!

He would willingly have spoke more; but could not support his *Anguish*; — and wept again, very passionately; so, that, rising abruptly, he hastened out of the Room, and left *Us all* in great *Disorder*.

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